

Please rewrite the paragraph at page 10, lines 15-27 as follows:

A¹
When one of the failure detectors at the receiving end at a layer detects a communication failure, an Upstream Signaling Message (USM) signal is generated and sent to a peer using an upstream channel. As illustrated in Fig. 3 for example, if a channel 310 carrying data from node 300 to node 302 fails, node 302 sends a USM signal using a return channel back to node 300. To transmit the USM signals, each layer uses its own communication channel as the return channel. The form of the signaling message varies depending on the layer. For example, at the link layer, a message takes the form of a series of bytes in the FEC channel. As described in more detail below, messages at the wavelength layer take the form of a pattern of modulation of an optical carrier.

Please rewrite the paragraph at page 11, lines 3-22 as follows:

A²
In addition to the upstream signaling, a downstream signaling message (DSM) signal is sent to the adjacent higher layer over an interlayer communication channel for initiating protection. More specifically, a W-DSM signal is used by the fiber layer to alert the wavelength layer of a communication failure; an L-DSM signal is used by the wavelength layer to alert the link layer of a failure, and a C-DSM signal is used by the link layer to alert the circuit layer of a failure. In contrast to the USM signal, the DSM signal travels in a downstream direction of the failure. For instance, if a communication failure occurs between node 300 and node 302, a DSM signal is generated at node 302 and travels downstream away from node 300 on channel 314. As generally shown in Fig. 3, if the channel 310 between nodes 300 and 302 fails, both of the failure detectors at

A2
nodes 300 and 302 detect the failure and each node sends a USM signal upstream for signaling the failure along a return channel of channel 310. If further protection is to be performed at higher layers, DSM signals are sent in the downstream direction along channels 312 and 314.

Please rewrite the paragraph at page 15, lines 1-8 as follows:

A3
When a protection switching element at the circuit layer detects a communication failure (either by itself or responsive to a C-DSM signal), a C-USM signal is sent to its peer. The C-USM signal is sent over the K1/K2 bytes in the SONET line overhead. If the failure involves only a transponder or a single fiber, the other circuit termination device receives the C-USM signal, which will determine the protection switching to be performed for that circuit.

In the Claims

Please add the following claims to read as follows:

sub B1
A4
2. (Added) A system according to claim 1, wherein said failure detectors generate upstream signal message (USM) signals for controlling the protection switching of said predetermined network connections on said intralayer communication channels and downstream signal message (DSM) signals for controlling the protection switching of said predetermined network connections of